

resent who did come home after service in World War II and all those who have guarded our security since. Our Nation is in your debt. We will never forget your valor, your sacrifices, the daily lives that you have made possible.

Let me say, too, a special word of appreciation to those of you who came through the line today who told me that you, too, were going back to Europe this week to be part of that celebration. I hope when you go back, you will feel the immense pride and gratitude that all Americans feel for the sacrifice you made, the commitment you made, and for all the days you made possible in the 50 years since. And I hope everyone else who is here being honored today will also share in some of that pride. We sometimes forget that no democracy in human history has ever lasted as long as the United States of America. It is easy to forget that. It is easy to forget it, but if you measure against all the recorded history of civilization, every day we have is a miracle, a miracle that you made possible, and we thank you for it.

I'm going to sign the proclamations, and then Mr. Gober and Mr. Runyon are in charge of the rest of the program.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs Hershel Gober.

### **Proclamation 6696—Prayer For Peace, Memorial Day, 1994**

*May 30, 1994*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Each year as summer approaches, we pause to honor the memory of those who died in service to our Nation. Even though the Cold War is over, there are still reminders—past and present—that the price of peace can be very dear indeed. One reminder, engraved in the stone memorial at the Omaha Beach Cemetery, eloquently states, “To these we owe our highest resolve, that the cause for which they died, shall live.” Whether at Valley Forge or in the skies above

Iraq, this tribute poignantly expresses the gratitude felt by all Americans as we remember the men and women in uniform who made the supreme sacrifice.

Each year, on the last Monday in May, we pause to pray for peace and to pay homage to those who have died defending our liberties, service men and women from all generations and from all wars. But this year, Memorial Day especially recalls those Americans who helped change the course of history and helped preserve a world in which the ideals of freedom and individual rights could flourish. One week from today, on June 6, we will observe the 50th Anniversary of D-Day. On that day in 1944, the world witnessed perhaps the greatest military action in history—and the beginning of the end of Nazi Germany's stranglehold on Europe.

The passage of 50 years has seen the birth of new generations of Americans who know of D-Day only from their history lessons. Fifty years may have dimmed the memories of some who were alive during World War II, but we need only look at those “reminders” of the price of freedom to understand what happened on that day 50 years ago.

Anzio, Utah Beach, Omaha Beach, Pointe du Hoc, and Normandy—each is an unforgettable chapter in our Nation's history. Each is a name that invokes memories of patriotism and valor, of teamwork and sacrifice.

Each reminds us that our Nation was founded on the belief that our democratic ideals are worth fighting for and, if necessary, worth dying for. We have a sacred obligation to remember for all time the names and the deeds of the Americans who paid that price for all of us.

In respect and recognition of those courageous men and women to whom we pay tribute today, the Congress, by joint resolution of May 11, 1950 (64 Stat. 158), has requested the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe each Memorial Day as a day of prayer for permanent peace and designating a period on that day when the people of the United States might unite in prayer.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Memorial Day, May 30, 1994, as a day of prayer for permanent peace,

and I designate the hour beginning in each locality at 11 o'clock in the morning of that day as a time to unite in prayer. I urge the press, radio, television, and all other information media to cooperate in this observance.

I also request the Governors of the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag be flown at half-staff during this Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States and in all areas under its jurisdiction and control, and I request the people of the United States to display the flag at half-staff from their homes for the customary forenoon period.

**In Witness Whereof**, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 2:39 p.m., May 31, 1994]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on June 2.

### **Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia May 30, 1994**

Thank you very much, Mrs. McIntosh, for your fine introduction and for your service to our Nation in Asia during the Second World War. To you and your husband, Professor Shriner, who sang so well—I could imagine him at the age of 24 singing again; to Katy Daley; all the others here; and General Gordon; the distinguished leaders of our Armed Forces, the Congress, and the administration; to the leaders of the veterans' organizations present here; to all of you who are veterans and your families; my fellow Americans.

This morning we join, as we always do on this day, to honor the sacrifices that have made our Nation free and strong. All across our Nation, small towns are holding quiet Memorial Day ceremonies. Proud veterans are pinning on their medals. Children are lay-

ing wreaths. Men and women in uniform everywhere stand a little bit taller today as they salute the colors.

Here at Arlington, row after row of headstones, aligned in silent formation, reminds us of the high cost of our freedom. Almost a quarter of a million Americans rest here alone, from every war since the Revolution. Among them are many names we know: General Pershing, Audie Murphy, General Marshall, and so many others. But far more numerous are the Americans whose names are not famous, whose lives were not legend but whose deeds were the backbone that secured our Nation's liberty. Today we honor them. We honor them all as heroes, those who are buried here and those who are buried all around the Nation and the world.

If you look at the headstones, they don't tell you whether the people buried there are poor or rich. They make no distinction of race or of age or of condition. They simply stand, each of them, for one American. Each reminds us that we are descendants, whatever our differences, of a common creed, unbeatable when we are united: one nation under God.

Fifty years ago, the world learned just what Americans are capable of when we joined in common cause in World War II. Later this week it will be my great honor to represent our Nation in Europe at the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the World War II campaigns at Normandy and in Italy.

World War II was an era of sacrifice unequalled in our own history. Over 400,000 Americans died in the service of our Nation. At D-Day alone, over 5,200 were killed or wounded in Normandy. But the battle that was fought there was not just between two armies; it was, as clearly as any conflict in all of human history, a battle between two ways of life.

The totalitarians whose tanks had overrun so much of the earth honestly believed democracies were too undisciplined to survive. Hitler believed a free people would never muster the unity of purpose to win the Second World War. But in the chaos of battle, it was the independence and the can-do confidence of the sons and daughters of America and the other democracies that won the day. And all across our Nation, in factories and